

# SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA EXAMINER

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## Filner demands improvements to administration of Veterans prescription drug benefits

Congressman Bob Filner today demanded that America's Veterans be granted more flexibility in how they get their prescription drugs. Currently, in order to have a prescription filled by the Veterans Administration (VA), a veteran must see a VA doctor. However, getting an appointment with a VA doctor can take months — frequently leaving the veteran without needed prescription medication.

"Our veterans should not have to wait for their prescription drugs," said Congressman Filner. "And they should not be handcuffed by arbitrary bureaucratic rules."

Congressman Filner has agreed to co-sponsor the following bills to correct the current problem:

- H.R. 1309, authored by Illinois Congressman Lane Evans, would allow Medicare-eligible veterans to fill prescriptions ordered by private, non-VA physicians in VA medical care facilities.

- H.R. 240, authored by Florida Congressman John Mica, would allow the VA to fill a prescription written by a

private doctor after a veteran has waited for an appointment for longer than 30 days.

- H.R. 372, authored by Massachusetts Congressman Stephen Lynch, sets up a pilot program to let the VA fill prescriptions written by private doctors.

- H.R. 709, authored by Mississippi Congressman Roger Wicker, would provide the option for all veterans to fill their prescriptions ordered by private physicians at the VA.

All four bills would allow veterans to bypass an extra examination by VA medical staff, in addition to the examination already done by a non-VA doctor.

"The current system just doesn't make sense," said Congresssman Filner. "Our veterans were ready — on a moment's notice — to serve their country. Why are we now forcing them to see two doctors for the same problem and wait around for months to get the medication they need?"